

Disappearing Bruises

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/25683508) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/25683508>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Spider-Man (Tom Holland Movies)
Relationship:	Peter Parker & Tony Stark
Character:	Peter Parker , Tony Stark , Ned Leeds , May Parker (Spider-Man)
Additional Tags:	Mental Health Issues , Dissociative Identity Disorder , Peter Parker Needs a Hug , Peter Parker Has Issues , what if spider man didn't know he was spider man? , Tony Stark Has A Heart , Protective Tony Stark , Angst and Hurt/Comfort
Collections:	Bad Things Happen Bingo , Irongad Creators Awards 2021 - Nominations
Stats:	Published: 2020-08-03 Words: 2786

Disappearing Bruises

by [HappyJuicyfruit](#)

Summary

Peter looked down at the bruise on his arm. It was dark, shaped like a handprint. It looked like someone had grabbed him, really hard. But he couldn't remember where it had come from.

He'd gone to bed at 9. All he had done before was dinner with May and homework. And it hadn't been there when he'd changed into his pj's so...

Had it gotten it in his sleep?

He pressed down on the bruise, but it didn't hurt. Weird.

He got up for the day. Had cereal, went to shower. By the time he was pulling on a sweater for the school day, the bruise had disappeared.

Peter didn't think much of it.

Notes

Hello lovely readers!

This fic is mostly Peter being confused about his own mental health/losing time. It focuses on DID (used to be known as multiple personality disorder). If anyone has any issues with that, please take care of yourselves, this one might not be for you!

Also disclaimer, I don't know anyone with this disorder, I have tried to be as accurate and respectful as possible. Please let me know if I need to make any changes/add any tags.
Thank you!

Happy reading!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Peter has lost time for as long as he can remember. It started with his parents, he thinks, though he was so young when that happened, it's hard to know for sure.

But when they died... one minute, he had been playing with his uncle, the next... he still wasn't sure, looking back. Months had gone by. His room had been set up. May had smiled at him when he asked if they could make pancakes, she said it was nice to see him getting back to his old self.

His old self. He hadn't known what his new self had been.

But his aunt and uncle were already so worried about him, already so careful with what they said, how they acted, and he hadn't wanted them to worry more. Besides, he googled it, a few years later, and grief could do a lot to a person. Grief could take years away from people, it said. It could change entire personalities.

That must have been what May meant, right?

And if he kept losing time, it was just in small amounts. An hour, here or there. A weekend or two. But that was normal, wasn't it? No one had a perfect memory.

He had a babysitter named Skip that Ned hated, who Peter couldn't remember meeting.

He still didn't know what his parents' grave stones looked like, because he couldn't ever remember going to see them. Even though May said they went once a month.

He couldn't remember a half of their field trip to Oscorp, which sucked, but wasn't a big deal. He didn't think...

He couldn't remember growing out of his glasses.

He didn't remember working out to the point where he had a six-pack, but he must have, at some point?

He couldn't remember what happened to Ben. May didn't like to talk about that either.

But he was fairly sure... that was normal.

Grief did strange things to a person, after all.

--

Peter looked down at the bruise on his arm. It was dark, shaped like a handprint. It looked like someone had grabbed him, really hard. But he couldn't remember where it had come from.

He'd gone to bed at 9. All he had done before was dinner with May and homework. And it hadn't been there when he'd changed into his pj's so...

Had it gotten it in his sleep?

He pressed down on the bruise, but it didn't hurt. Weird.

He got up for the day. Had cereal, went to shower. By the time he was pulling on a sweater for the school day, the bruise had disappeared.

Peter didn't think much of it.

--

He woke up in the middle of the night to pee, and nearly screamed when he saw his face in the

mirror.

He had a black eye. Like, a serious, full, fucking *painful* , black eye.

Had he fallen out of bed? Had he... accidentally dropped a textbook on his face? His chemistry text was pretty heavy, but... he couldn't remember what had happened the night before. May had been late home from work. And Peter had...

Gotten a black eye, somehow?

He went back to bed with an ice pack on his face.

When he woke up, the bruise was gone, and the ice pack was shoved under his bed.

He convinced himself he had dreamed the whole thing.

--

Peter came home to Tony freaking *Stark* sitting on his couch talking to Aunt May. He wanted to talk to Peter, about an internship, *alone* . He didn't remember applying for an internship - but, hey, if it had brought Tony Stark into his apartment he was fine with that.

Peter closed his bedroom door. Tony Stark turned around and -

Peter opened his eyes to a dark room. It was night time. He was dressed in his pj's, standing in the middle of his room. He frowned, disappointed and confused.

He didn't know... what had happened. But a wave of reassurance washed over him, making him feel like it had been taken care of. He didn't need to worry about it...

He shook his head, he didn't know where that had come from. But the feeling persisted, so he bit his lip and went to bed. He'd worry about it in the morning.

--

May was worried about him, but he didn't know why. He was getting straight A's still. He was healthier than he had ever been before. He was... missing, some days, but... she couldn't know about that. Surely nothing important happened on those days anyway, or there would be signs or... something.

--

Flash was talking about Spider Man again. Ned, who usually hated Flash, was agreeing with everything he was saying.

Apparently, Spider Man was the cool new thing to be obsessed about in their school. Everyone wanted to meet him. Get a picture of him, catch a video of him up close.

Ned kept going on and on about his new suit, and how it was obvious Tony Stark had designed it.

Peter didn't really care, he had more important things to worry about. And.. something inside him was telling him it was safer to stay away from superheroes.

--

"Dude, where have you been?"

Peter blinked, "I was in..." he looked around. The halls were empty. He went to check his watch, but he wasn't wearing one.

"It's almost 5, you missed decathlon practice. *Again*."

Again? He had been in chem, and then... what had they been doing? He couldn't even remember the lesson.

“Peter, MJ think’s you're having a mental breakdown, or something. She thinks you should be taken off the team.”

A mental breakdown... Was that what happened?

“Peter-”

“I, uh, got distracted, with chem work... sorry.”

“Peter, I’m *in* your chem class, you said you were right behind me.”

Had he said that? Had it been a lie, at the time?

“Pete... is this like... with Skip? Is something going on?” Ned leaned in, concern written over his face. He put a hand on his arm. Peter wished he knew what he meant, he didn’t remember Skip. “Cause I can help you, like I did with Skip. Whatever it is, we can talk to May together, like we did last time.”

Peter felt dizzy. He had an ache behind his eyes.

He blinked, and he was sitting on their couch. It was raining outside. May was talking about a movie... probably the one playing on TV.

Peter shook his head, confused.

“You okay, baby?”

Peter cleared his throat, “yeah.”

He checked his phone. It was Sunday... but hadn’t it been Tuesday? Had a whole week gone by?

Was he missing more and more time? He swallowed. His chest felt tight.

--

Sometimes, Peter had dreams like he was flying. Or falling. Or... swinging?

Sometimes, Peter felt like he knew the feeling of jumping off the top of a building.

Sometimes, Peter woke up with bruises, and they were gone within an hour. He woke up with aches and pains that left as soon as they came.

Sometimes, Peter felt like he wasn't getting any sleep, despite the fact that he was going to bed earlier and earlier, and waking up later and later.

Sometimes... Peter felt like he was losing his fucking mind.

--

Peter blinked. It was windy, and bright. He had something clenched in his hand.

And Tony freaking Stark was glaring at him.

Peter looked around. They were... on a roof? He was... holding the Spider Man mask? Peter wanted to drop it, but if anything his fingers tightened around the fabric (fabric? Was it made of fabric?) even more.

He looked back up to Tony freaking Stark still looking at him. And it must be at him, because... there was literally no one else around them.

“Um, I’m... what’s going on?”

Tony freaking Stark rolled his eyes, “you heard me, kid. Enough with the dramatics, I’m taking the suit back.”

The suit. Right. That seemed fair, Peter didn’t know why he had it in the first place, anyway. He held it out to him. Tony freaking Stark raised a brow, taking the mask, and then nodded towards him.

“The whole thing, smartass.”

The whole... Peter looked down, he was wearing- he was *wearing the Spider Man suit* .

Why was he wearing -

“Woah, kid, breath,” Tony freaking Stark was getting into his space, Peter flinched back. “Hey, it’s okay-”

--

Peter opened his eyes, looked down at the picture he was colouring in. It was a rough draft of an Iron Man suit. Peter was colouring it in purple.

He looked up. He was in some sort of... lab. And Tony freaking Stark was still watching him, but this time it wasn’t a glare. This time it was like he was scared.

Scared of Peter? That was weird.

“Hi,” Peter said, because Tony Stark wasn’t saying anything.

“Hey, kid,” Tony Stark smiled at him, but it looked strained. “Do you, uh, know who I am?”

“You’re Tony Stark.”

Mr. Stark's shoulders relaxed, but not by very much. "And... what's your name?"

Peter furrowed his brows, because surely Mr. Stark knew his name. He was in his lab, after all. "I'm Peter."

"Peter," Mr. Stark nodded, "we've uh... met before, right?"

"Yeah," Peter agreed. "Twice."

"Only twice?" Mr. Stark closed his eyes, like just the thought of them having only met twice made him sad. Peter didn't really understand that... but he didn't really understand much, right now.

"Yeah. Once with Aunt May and... once on top of a building..." with the Spider Man sui- Peter shut that thought down. That.. hadn't happened, the way Peter was remembering it. It couldn't have. But he looked down to find himself dressed in a Stark sweatshirt and Hello Kitty pj pants. He didn't know where either of those had come from... what had happened to his clothes?

He looked back up to find Mr. Stark running a hand over his face, "can you, uh, tell me about that? When we met at your apartment?"

That was a weird request... but everything here was weird, so whatever.

"You were sitting with Aunt May on the couch when I got home... you mentioned an internship." Mr. Stark nodded. "And then we went into my room to talk."

Mr. Stark nodded again, but Peter didn't know what else to say. "What did we talk about in your room, Pete?"

"Uh," Peter looked down, at the purple Iron Man, "the internship? Is that... what this is?"

Mr. Stark let out a breath, "not exactly, bud."

"Then why am I here?" He asked. He didn't mean to sound so small but... he was confused. And

dizzy. And he was getting a headache.

He just wanted to go home.

Mr. Stark sighed again, “I think we’ve both bitten off more than we can chew with this one, kid.”

Peter frowned. He hadn’t bitten off anything, from what he could remember. “I don’t understand.”

Mr. Stark grimaced, “I know you don’t. What I mean is... I think it’s time we call in some help. And call your Aunt.”

Peter nodded, because that made sense. She was probably worried about where he was. But anger was bubbling up inside of him all of a sudden and-

--

Peter blinked, and he was in a pale blue room, with a couch, and a desk. May and Mr. Stark were off to the side whispering about something with... someone Peter could only assume was a doctor. May was upset. She kept repeating, “he’s just quiet sometimes,” and “a lot of teenagers sneak out!”

Peter didn’t remember ever sneaking out, but he was starting to think that didn’t mean much.

He looked down at his pants - still the Hello Kitty pj’s. He didn’t have his phone.

Mr. Stark looked over at him first. He cocked his head, “Peter?”

“Yeah?”

“Oh my God,” May whispered, a hand over her mouth. Peter frowned.

“May? What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” May shook her head, she had tears in her eyes though, so clearly something was wrong. “We just... need to talk, sweetie. You, Me, Dr. Cho here and uh,” May glanced at the man beside her, “Mr. Stark.”

“...Okay.”

--

Dissociative Identity Disorder. It sounded scary, because it was.

Apparently, Peter has been running around as Spider Man for over a year now. Apparently, Peter had fucking *super powers* .

He'd been in a special Stark superheroes hospital for a week now, getting tested. Going over... what to do with him. Peter only remembered a few days of the week.

He supposed it was more important to get Spider Man under control, than him. Spider Man was the vigilante running around the city. They needed to talk to him more than they needed to talk to Peter.

Peter just sat at home and did his homework.

Though, he'd also learned, in those few days, that he apparently has two *other* personalities, or 'alters' as Dr. Cho and her team called them, in his head too. One of them liked to colour and draw. Mr. Stark said he called himself Henry.

The other one was older. His name was Bug, and he didn't talk much. Apparently, in the year after his parents died, Peter had only wanted to be called Bug. May had been crying when Peter had come back to the room, after Bug had been there.

Bug was where May's nickname for him had come from. Peter had never known.

May hadn't either.

He... didn't like any of this. Though it did explain a lot.

--

"Do you know if his name is Spider Man? Does he have a real name?"

Mr. Stark shrugged. Peter was impressed he was still here, since he was sure Tony Stark was a very busy man. But Spider Man would only talk to him, not Aunt May or any doctors. So Mr. Stark had stayed.

Though he looked a bit guilty, whenever Peter asked about him, "if he had another name, he's never told me. Happy might know, he talked to the... he talked to Spider Man more than I did."

"Who is Happy?"

Mr. Stark scratched his chin, "he works for me."

"Oh."

Silence. Peter fiddled with a blanket nervously. He wasn't sure why Mr. Stark was here, in his new hospital bedroom, when all the tests and questions were done for the day. It was probably to talk to Spider Man. Peter felt bad that it was only plain old Peter Parker here instead.

"Sorry."

Mr. Stark raised a brow at him, leaning back in the only chair in the room. "For what? Having a mental illness? Cause let me tell you, kid, you're not alone in that. I have my own issues. You don't have to apologize to me for anything."

"Uh, no... I'm sorry Spider Man won't come out. I know you're here to talk to him, but..." Peter felt irritation in his chest, feelings that weren't actually his own. "I think he's mad at you."

Mr. Stark hummed, “I bet he is, I won’t let him go out patrolling... but he’s not why I’m here. May had to do one last shift before she could go on emergency leave, I’m here to keep an eye on you when she’s out.”

“Oh.” May hadn’t left, since she found out about his diagnoses.... As far as he knew. It was probably good for her to get away from all of this for a second. Peter didn’t even have to deal with it all the time.

Though... what were they going to do, now that they knew about it?

Was Peter going to... live here now? Forever?

He didn’t like that idea. Neither did Spider Man’s sharp irritation in his chest. Peter winced, rubbing a hand over the ache.

“What’s wrong?”

“Spider Man’s annoyed.”

“... and you can feel that?”

Peter nodded, “yeah, it’s... new. But I can feel him in my chest. I can feel Bug in my stomach, and Henry in my hands... Sorry, I know that probably doesn’t make any sense-”

“Hey, what did I just say about apologizing?”

Peter closed his mouth, he nodded.

All parts of him buzzed with worry. None of them knew what was going to happen now.

“Hey, kid, look at me,” Peter looked up, Mr. Stark was smiling at him, a reassuring smile. “We’re

going to figure this out, okay? Now that we know what's going on, we'll figure it out. You're not going to be stuck in here forever. The smartest minds on the planet are on it. Including yours."

Peter felt Spider Man's anger in his chest loosen. It was replaced by a calming wave - telling Peter he could trust this. Trust Mr. Stark.

And Peter found himself smiling back.

They would figure this out.

--

End Notes

Thanks for reading everyone, leave a comment or kudos to let me know what you think!

I've considered writing a second chapter in Tony's perspective, what do y'all think?

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!